

## Important Considerations for Early Access

- *Kindergarten and First Grade are academically rigorous programs that stress language arts and math, as well as social and emotional development.*
- *Young children can become anxious and stressed when expectations for their performance exceed their developmental capabilities.*
- *There is variable research that early entrance either hurts or helps students. However, a child who is exceptional and successful at an early age may benefit from this opportunity.*
- *It is important to remember that a child who enters kindergarten or first grade early will be younger than his/her classmates throughout his/her academic career. This can have a significant impact on their social and emotional development.*
- *Early Access is personal to the child applying. There is no one answer. Each child's strengths and challenges must be weighed. The goal for Littleton Public Schools is to work collaboratively with parents/guardians to ensure that the best decision is reached.*

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Coordinator for Gifted & Talented  
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Early Access to Kindergarten  
or 1st Grade



Littleton Public Schools, in accordance with the Colorado Exceptional Children's Education Act (ECEA) and Board Policy JEB (Entrance Age Requirements), allows students who do not meet the entrance age requirement for enrollment in kindergarten or first grade to apply for early access should the following criteria apply:

They are transferring from an accredited state or private kindergarten or first grade. Accreditation will be recognized from state and/or national organizations.

**OR**

They will be 4 years old in kindergarten or 5 years old in first grade as documented by a legal birth certificate or other acceptable record by the first day of school in LPS **AND** meet the criteria for gifted and talented identification as outlined in ECEA under the Early Access into kindergarten or first grade provision.

The decision for a child to enter school early can have a profound effect on his/her academic and social performance for the remainder of the child's school career. It is a decision that needs to be taken very seriously.

Applications for Early Access to Kindergarten and First Grade are only accepted for the upcoming school year from **January 1st-August 1st** of that year (for example, applications for the 2009-2010 school year are only accepted from January 1st to August 1st of 2009).

**No applications will be accepted after August 1st of that calendar year.**

### ***How do I apply for Early Access?***

- Parents must contact the elementary school which they plan to attend and notify them of their interest in early access to kindergarten or first grade.
- Parents will then be directed to contact the Coordinator for Gifted & Talented at the District Office.
- The District Coordinator for Gifted & Talented will then inform the parent(s) about the process and will mail them a detailed description of the process.

### ***What Does the Process Look Like?***

- The parent decides to pursue early access by completing the process as outlined by the District Coordinator.
- If the student meets the criteria for identification as gifted and talented as defined in the Exceptional Children's Education Act and LPS procedures, the student's portfolio will be brought forward to the local school's Early Access Team for a decision. The school's Early Access team may include the principal, district coordinator, G/T school psychologist, G/T facilitator for that school, kindergarten teacher and/or preschool teachers, and any other appropriate person (i.e. counselor, ESL teacher or Special Ed teacher, etc.)

- The team reviews the complete body of evidence and makes a decision regarding placement.
- Parents will be contacted with the decision of the placement team. If the child is placed in the program, a conference is scheduled with the parent (s) and any appropriate school personnel to develop an Advanced Learning Plan (required by state rules for all identified GT students) for the school year of enrollment.

### **PLEASE NOTE:**

**The final decision to accept or not to accept a student is ALWAYS at the discretion of the local school.**



**For further information  
please contact:**

### **Gifted Education Dept.**

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